



CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
GENERAL SESSION MEETING #666
Friday, March 5, 2004 – 9 A.M
Veterans Home of Barstow, CA



GENERAL SESSION:

The California Veterans Board (CVB) monthly public meeting was called to order at 9 A.M. Board members present included Chairman George Sinopoli (Fresno), Vice Chairman Leo Burke, Members Jerry Basconcillo (Delano), and Judy Gaze (San Diego), and Larry Lattman (Yountville)

Frank Ortiz led the invocation. Bill Jackson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary Thomas Johnson introduced CDVA Staff.

Chairman Sinopoli introduced the members of the Board, and CVB Executive Officer Sandra Munoz.

Chairman Sinopoli introduced new board member, William Shadish. William Shadish introduced himself.

Chairman Sinopoli introduced new Interim Secretary Leon Tuttle.

The audience introduced themselves.

Chairman Sinopoli opening remarks. The Chairman thanked everyone for coming. The chairman stated that is a very important meeting, this board helps the department of Veterans Affairs with Policies and Procedures and helping veterans of the State of California. Mr. Secretary, is new on the job and I hope you have a few comments on how the future is going to be.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Thank you Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen and members of the board. I noticed the minutes of the last meeting Interim Secretary Tuttle said he was giving a 10-day report, I can pass him by seven days. This is a seventh day report. A few comments relative to my seventh day. When the Governor asked me to consider this position, I did have several interviews with him. There were three reasons why it resonated with me, thirty four years of health care, after a year and a half of retirement I felt very honored to serve veterans, I am a veteran. That was my first reason for accepting this position. Secondly I fee honored to continue in public service. I have been in public service all of my career although most of it in a very entrepreneurial way. Thirdly I felt that the

Governor has some excellent ideas on how to improve the way Government responds to people, the way Government would run its enterprises. He seems to willingly take on some new challenges and new ideas. Working across the aisles with both parties for the betterment of the people we serve. I felt it to be an opportunity to work for this Governor in doing things and I am inclined towards change, I am inclined to new thinking. My world has changed and I spent two and half weeks trying to get my arms around the issues of the department. Trying to meet the people and have enjoyed meeting the veterans at all three homes. We have wonderful veterans and people that have enjoyed meeting and will continue to enjoy. I have spoken at four different veteran events and I am getting to know the legislatures as well. The challenges are enormous but the potential is great. I am excited to be part of the department and work for Governor Schwarzenegger's administration. I am not a miracle worker but I am hard worker. I have staff I am learning to work with. I will apply my best efforts to make this department the best department in the state. One newspaper reported that this department is not considered the best department in the state. There has been a series of leadership changes I think have been a part of that difficulty with a number of different Secretaries and the lack of ability to take visions forward, to create momentum, build a team, to achieve goals and I am hoping I can break that string of short term Secretaries. I am glad to be here and to work with you on behalf of veterans.

George Sinopoli, Chairman: Welcome aboard comments from the chairman to the new Secretary of the Veterans Affairs.

Motion moved to approve December 5, 2004 minutes.

Report on Old Business Construction given by Secretary Johnson: Reported for George Andries. There are a few updates that will be given. This is very exciting project and but also very complicated. Our department has made a lot of progress as in meeting the requirements that were made before us through the public's vote as well as through the various studies that have been done relative to the need of California. To explain it in the simplest terms, the department of Finance for the state of California is the financing agent for the project. They are concerned how the bonds are used and the future cost that come to the state after the project is built. They are concerned of the kinds of arrangements that are made. It is the financing role that the Department of Finance plays in this project. The department of General Services is like the Contractor. They are the ones that do the building, the supervise construction. Department of Veterans Affairs is really the client. We are the ones who have the project and working together in the best possible way. Looking at how health care is going to be delivered today and in the future. We know that health care is a dynamic enterprise. We know that taking care of patients today may not be the best way of taking care of patients tomorrow. The best ideas in a continual care retirement community today may not be the best for tomorrow. I think there has been a lot of good research done relative to changing trans of medicines, change of demographics of the residents and veterans that we serve. That means there is a need for a more private type of room. There are many more examples and I think our staff has done a good job in identifying these trends and identifying the kinds of homes and the kinds of retirement settings that are going to be the best in the future. Our difficulty right now, the impasse that we are running against the problem is bringing in the department of Finance and the department of General Services to the extent needed as we work out the Memo of Understanding with the Department of Veterans Affairs. The meeting yesterday that was really an attempt to get the parties together as one team for the first time, it was chaired by the Secretary of Department of General Services Frank Aguiar and he did a wonderful job in laying it out and getting a team together. A team together that will now be able to meet with the USDVA team and try to iron this Memo of Understanding out and I talked with Ken Clark recently who is head of the Southern California Region and he has put his team together and our goal is to try to get this Memo Of Understanding completed within the 45 day period, at least by April 20th. It is an ambitious role we still have a lot of issues particularly with department of finance relative to some of their concerns rather than bond

financing and other issues that they would like to see fully explore but they are part of the team now this was the lack before they were not part of team but they are now part of the team as is the department of general services. I can report to you that the planning has been extensive and there are good ideas behind the structure and the concept and if we have meet our goal and getting this memo of understanding completed and the arrangements worked out with the US department of veterans affairs the kind of partnership that we envision on the West Los Angeles campus and the two satellite facilities in Lancaster and Ventura then I think we could meet the construction time table that suggest that the first new home would be open approximately November 2007 that would be Lancaster simultaneously the construction would be occurring continuing in West Los Angeles because it is a much larger project the opening of that home is not anticipated until the same time 2008 simultaneously also the home constructed in Venture opening shortly after the one in Lancaster. We have signed at the departments perspective a transfer of land in Lancaster, still need final signatures in Venture and still need signatures from General Services and other departments for that plan. We are moving forward...

George Sinopoli, Chairman: Asked Terry Tracy to come forward for this comments.

Terry Tracy, American Legion: I have been tracking the program at West Los Angeles for some time, I say this to you because I live around three quarter of a mile from there. Our Commander Jim Hackney and our Adjutant put together a letter and sent it to the Governor on January 26th of this year addressing issues about the Veterans Homes. We became alarmed because during the course of this there were minutes from Yountville and Barstow talking about the Interim Acting Secretary making comments to the effect that the CDVA would discontinue their efforts in the new homes. I got involved and asked my Commander to launch a letter writing campaign. Many of the recipients responded favorably. The overall impact of that letter writing made the Governor aware of the Veterans in Los Angeles Area. I say that because a lot of these homes have been politicized. I say that because there is a lot of legislation. The LA VA area, the area that is responsible for health care includes 1.2 million veterans, I am going to say this to you, that this area has nearly 5% of the Nations veterans. It is important that there needs be meet. Mr. Tuttle the Interim Acting Secretary was quoted in minutes of meetings saying no more new homes until all the rooms included the care facilities are filled. I understand that, many of you are residents here and enjoy it and it could be done and I am sure the new Secretary is going to make it better, but we have to think about the subsequent generations that will follow you and need of the new homes, and I for one are going to be one of the next, I hope to be in West LA. There is a time line of interaction between California Veterans Affairs and the US Department of Veterans Affairs. This is how CDVA was in pursuing the West LA venture. The greater Los Angeles in 2001 submitted an application, October 2001 state of California officially recommends West Los Angeles be the site, here is the kicker, February 2003 first meeting. February 2003 USDVA central office to the state of California a commitment letter. March 2003 a second meeting, April 17 official start date of the design of the home. May 20, 2003 CDVA wanted to back away from one of the items, which is called, enhance usage agreement. That is the greater Los Angeles health care system did not want the state to be in the middle of their campus and turn out to be like Barstow and they wanted to make sure it was a success. They said California you build a kitchen and we will reimburse you and will feed not only the occupants of the home but also the patients of the hospital. We will also offer you laundry serves, they have a laundry service down in Los Angeles that does the laundry for every hospital in VISN 22 area, and it is a mega laundry, not to mention the health care services. The point of contact fro the CDVA went home and dissected that agreement. He dissected so that it was only land and we will get to that later. That is not the way to do business in a partnership, I wouldn't venture in a marriage that way. Anyway, June 3, 2003 Los Angeles forwards another proposed MOU, July 15 they provide a project briefing for local and state people. August 13th another briefing. September 22, 2003 the state responded with two MOU's. The state responds with a single MOU. Then there was a meeting set up between key officials, the USVA and CDVA to discuss the site project, but here is the one, January 7, 2004 that meeting did not take place,

it took place January 29, 2004. That was the first time the finance people and the General Services people were involved in the program, which also prompted a letter by the director to Mr. Andries with a cc to Leon Tuttle, I will just read the last two paragraphs...I am not a fly on the wall, I am saying we have to go forward with this thing. It says on here that CDVA estimated 105 million dollars for the project. Two weeks ago Saturday the Secretary said 151 million. For the records it was 105 the Secretary got in there and started digging and said it was grossly underestimated. There are some reversion clauses in the land, land transfer issues. California says we don't want any reversion clause at least until twenty years because we are using bond money. USVA says we have to have because if California decides to opt or decides not or discontinue operating as a California Veterans Home property would revert back to DVA and that is rightfully so because that property was donated to CDVA for purposes of serving veterans and veterans needs over the years. So what is the point in all of this, we want a commitment from California. We want a more open forum when we ask questions; we want the questions to be answered even if the answer brings great pain. I was in a meeting in Sacramento where the service organizations, for the first time got together and addressed the letter to the Governor stating if we could be of any assistance please call on us, and I would share the same offer to the Secretary at this time.

Larry Lattman, member: I would like to share some light on this, proposition 16 which was initiated by Senator Chesbro and Joe Dunn out of the Veterans Committee in the Senate put on the ballot and passed. Part of that money was to build three new homes and rebuild the infrastructure of Yountville. I wanted to tell your organization to take back some good news that this year under the instruction of my chairman and as a chairman of the Allied Council I worked with the speaker of the Assembly Wesson. There were five bills floating around between the Senate and Assembly all on how much money should be carved out of Proposition 16 for the rebuilding of the infrastructure of Yountville and we got 15 million dollars out of that with matching federal funds approximately 30 million, so it comes out to be just under 44 million. Those projects will be started this spring. One is the Alzheimer's and dementia patients. We will do Annex I to rebuild the electricity in the home which has been neglected for 50 years. The plumbing in the home, pipes are breaking all over the place, those will be accomplished this year and then next year we start a project on the recreation hall and the phone system and that will use up all the approximately 40 sum odd million dollars, so the money that was passed by Proposition 16 under the Secretary order and the guidance of the California Veterans Board, is being used for some good projects so you can take back at least that bit of good news.

George Sinopoli, Chairman: Thanked Mr. Tracy for his report.

Ralph Tillman, Director Asset Management: I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to present before your board. I wanted to give an update where we are on our perspective from the USDVA in this project. If I was presenting before the board a week ago my presentation would be greatly different than what it's going to be today because on Tuesday this past week Secretary Johnson and our network Director Ken Clark had a phone conversation. During that phone conversation I believe we made great strides in a single moment. To be able to go forth in this project, as part of the record everyone can see in the letter we had written to the Interim Secretary we had been frustrated and we had felt we were at an impasse with the state on this project partnership that we all originally had envisioned. Again, those things change, Executive have talked there will be the establishment of a steering committee or negotiating teams on both sides. We will set down and we will iron out the MOU. When the MOU is in fact negotiated then it brings up a lot of the roadblocks. The land conveyance will not begin until the MOU is complete. The share agreement negotiated and executed we will feel that the project is truly back underway. I am not going to go into the history so much of what happened the past year. Mr. Tracy had covered it and Mr. Johnson has alluded to it. While we were frustrated and we felt it was time to take some sort of action on our part we do know feel that we have an opportunity to go forward. The

partnership that is involved in West LA is unique. It affords the two great agencies, the state, California DVA and the USDVA to truly collaborate. For us to provide part of the funding for the home, for the state to provide part funding, for the home to really marry our two areas of expertise, for us to provide the support services that we already have on station. For us to already provide Geriatric care, clinical care, that we have available. So there is a great mash if you will of the resources of the state and the federal. The hospital at the Los Angeles center, to come together and come up with the best home for veterans. We both felt the state and the Feds show that it is still the best way to go and it is the best thing for veterans who need a home in the West Los Angeles area. So I am confident that with the new team that the state is going to bring forward to the table for the MOU and the team we created with our network to come together for the MOU, so that with 45 days we can get it done and providing that other things occur than we are back on schedule. I would like with that to close out my remarks and answer and questions anyone might have.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Are we meeting the deadline with the Federal Government pertaining to the budget of this coming year?

Ralph Tillman: This is correct.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: I am not familiar with any deferral. I do know is that the original expectation of when the construction will start and when the homes will be opened as I understand it, it will take a full year of planning to get the concept drawings and then ultimately construction would start probably in summer 16. We are talking of another year's worth of time after this budget cycle maybe this is the deferral you are talking about. To get all the concept drawings and the working drawings and then construction starts sometime in the summer of 06, so it can open in 07. I don't know whether that is the change schedule but that is the schedule we are working towards now.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Do you feel confident that the state and federal government that the MOU is being worked out in the manner that we set a date?

Ralph Tillman: Well, we don't really know that we are just now forming the two committees in order to get together to execute the MOU. The discussion has been going on for about a year as Mr. Johnson the new Secretary has said the problem occurred perhaps where the lead representative of the state was not including the proper representative behind him to be able to support the states position. All though that is unfortunate, I believe that has been remedied with this new team that is come forward, so even though we have wasted some time in the negotiating of the MOU, while the MOU is being negotiated, the design team has gone forward with design development concepts, the program itself has been developed as for as the types of programs. The three components of the home all of that has gone forward and we allowed it to go forward because we didn't want to hold up the project just because we were not able to solidify the partnership relative to the sharing agreement and we knew the sharing agreement not take affect until after the home was built. The support services for the operation of the home, we knew we had some time in just that after a year we felt we had gotten to a point that something had to be done.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: One comment on that, I think special legislation was passed so we could go down these separate tracts simultaneously in other words doing the design and being allowed to use bond funds for that design while at the same time we worked out the partnership arrangement.

Ralph Tillman: In essence we got started in good faith February of last year, the two groups got together, and we were consistence in the original application. We have always felt to be important that it be a true partnership, that there be collaboration, and that collaboration being identifying in the

contractual document, so that is where it all started, where it all fell apart, there is not specific place in just over time we felt that the state was falling away from that partnership and were feeling to be more autonomous and running a independent home as we went forward and in our view regressed in the negotiation that it go to the point in January. It got to the point were we had to put a stop to it. We had to get something corrected in order to get back on track, I can't specifically tell you where the impasse was generated. All I can tell you in the letter in January where we felt something had to be done.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: Where did you first see the breakdown in this interaction on this project?

Ralph Tillman: I would say very recently when we were given a advanced presentation on the conception phased drawings in which there were representative from the department of general services who stated that the MOU that was returned to us was a result of the department of finance and department of general services were just apprised of the MOU and having issues with it, so that was 6 to 9 months after the original MOU was submitted to the state. So right there we knew there was an absolute break down in communications and DGS and DOF stated that.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: Why does the VA have to have a MOU with the state?

Ralph Tillman: From our viewpoint we feel that the veterans of the state would have the opportunity a state of the art home; you are truly going to have the prime real estate location in probably in the entire United States. The home will be overlooking beautiful ravens and the Getty Center. Great views, great for veterans in a care perspective. You're going to have the best geriatric care available not only because the greater Los Angeles health care system but our affiliation with UCLA and their programs as well. You've got great clinical services that can be provided so the need to have this MOU is literally the written need to have these clinical and other collaborative efforts. It is absolutely critical for the success of this home that you have this collaboration and thus we this MOU to support that collaboration.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: Thank you Mr. Tillman, I have a special interest because I chaired the Governors Commission of Veterans Homes.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: In your opinion could the CDVA meet their completion date?

Ralph Tillman: My would be an opinion outside the state, I can't tell you if they will meet their completion date. I could tell you that if we could get this MOU completed than if the project is resubmitted to the DVA state home program for the VA funding, if that is promptly resubmitted and in fact if the VA approves the project for 2005 then yes I would optimistically say yes, it could be meet, but there are so many factors between then and now, which could still then put road blocks to that completion date. So then no I can't say we will meet the completion date, but I could say it is possible if everything falls into place.

Howell Jackson, select committee member: Does the USDVA customarily or ordinarily require MOU's when it provides funds to other states to construct veterans homes.

Ralph Tillman: We did a lot of fact finding in that regards in each state does it differently the majority of state homes through out the United States literately provide land, they become neighbors, there might have been some collaborative efforts when there is a mutual usage, for example if the VA home has a laundry, the state decides to use the laundry but a lot of them have been land deals only. There have been some in collaboration but this would be the first state home, which will be housed on a DVA installation the opportunity presents itself.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Status on Independent Council.

Bruce Barnes, city of Fresno: Gave a detailed Report on the land for the Veterans Home in Fresno. There were a lot of efforts and cooperation between agencies that went into inquiring the parcel of land and not to mention the \$800,000 expended by the City of Fresno. On behalf of the Mayor and the City Council and our planning and development director the citizens of Fresno and especially the veterans in need of this new home we respectfully request that this board, Governor Schwarzenegger, and his staff take whatever measures necessary to make this new veterans home in the City of Fresno a reality.

Audience Individual: Is the Fresno home going to be built?

George Sinopoli, chairman: I don't have any idea, one of the features of the home when it is built will be surrounded by a beautiful golf course, the veterans home will be set right in the middle of it.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: The question of when it is going to be built, I cannot answer but what I do know it has to follow the work we are doing in the West Los Angeles project.

George Sinopoli, chairman: I understand that the bill was written by Senator Johannessen, that the three veterans homes, LA, Ventura, Lancaster be constructed and then the next bill that is piggy backed signed by the Governor that home in Shasta and Fresno will be built. The date Bruce I don't know but the home in Fresno will not be a warehouse. I don't want to warehouse our veterans.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: Thank you Bruce for your report.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Introduced his wife Mary and his grandson Anthony.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Reported on the Cemetery and the sharing cost with the Northern Counties and the state.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: Commended the Secretary for his communication on these matters.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Independent Council question asked to Secretary Johnson, Referred to Joe Maguire, chief council.

Joe Maguire, chief council: It has been researched and was referred to a letter written by John Hanretty February 18, 2004. An exemption has been filed, waiting for answer.

George Sinopoli, chairman: The veteran should have council on his appeal.

Howell Jackson, select committee member: Stated that he has agreed to do what he can on a pro bono basis.

Judy Gaze, member: Would like to look at the issue of the control of the board's budget.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Responded in that the allocation is part of the whole budget.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Matter of record, meetings have been cut by one day from a two-day meeting to cooperate with the budget crises. The veterans do need to be heard in person.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Reported on the audit of MWRF, office of inspector general, Julie Hom has been asked to perform the audit.

Joe Maguire, chief council: Reported that research has concluded that Audit cost could come out the MWRF. It is a decision approval by Administrator of the home and the Secretary.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Asked if that is the only time a particular expenses can be taken out of the fund?

Joe Maguire, chief council: No, there are specific limitations that can be used for and that is one of them, a one time expenditure.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Responded that Julie Hom responded very quickly and will be here on Monday to start the audit. A better solution than expending out of MWRF.

Larry Lattman, member: Responded that someone will be at Yountville this Monday to start the Audit.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Responded, I don't know how she could be at two places at the same time but she is doing it and is on the ball and that is progress.

George Sinopoli, chairman: How much is in the fund?

Secretary Thomas Johnson: They all have different funds.

George Sinopoli, chairman: I know that, it has not been audited in a long time, true?

Larry Lattman, member: This is audited al the time at Yountville, our post fund because we do make investments, our administrator is very cautious with that money, there is an in-house audit done quarterly.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: When was the name changed from Post Fund to MWRF.

Larry Lattman, member: Changed when Senator Chesbro's bill SB 1454 to protect the post fund to be used only for the health and welfare of the veterans and not to be used by the general fund.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: Please understand that any change audit that is performed is to be brought forward to the board for approval according to board policy.

Larry Lattman, member: I will see you will get a copy of the audit.

Howell Jackson, select committee member: Asked about a letter that stated a transfer of about 1.2 million from the MWRF to the general account, if that money is being transferred currently?

Larry Lattman, member: Stated that Senator Chesbro heard about it and he made a call to Interim Secretary Tuttle.

Joe Maguire, chief council: It takes legislation to do that. If somebody proposes a transfer, if the transfer is a contrary to the law the transfer will not happen unless there is a change to the law.

Howell Jackson, select committee member: Reminded the board that the MWRF audit is required annually and it must be submitted to the board for review and approval.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: There will always be a conflict within the law and board policies. There are times that it gets confusing.

Audience Individual: Commented on the MWRF and the future of that fund.

Bill Jackson: Commented on how the entire country was once broke. We have had enough of this budget crisis. We have ideas on how we would like to use our MWRF according to the law. We know the history of this program and this country and we are willing to help.

George Sinopoli, chairman: Commented that this Secretary seems to be for the veterans. On an article that came from Dr. Fox out of Yountville and we requested a reply from Interim Secretary Tuttle and we never received a response.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Referred to legal council. There is a joint conference committee for better health care.

Larry Lattman, member: Commented that Dr. Fox worked at the home four years ago and she had a view of a small majority. Yountville has in my opinion the best health care available in California.

Joe Maguire, member: Reported that Dr. Fox worked at Yountville from Feb 23, 1984 until June 2000 and retired as a surgeon. We asked Marcella to respond and a joint conference committee's reports. Reported the statistics of doctors and paying of contracts. All problems have been resolved.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: All we wanted was an answer from the Interim Secretary.

Joe Maguire, chief council: Commented on the article, that there was little substance in the article.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Commented on the article, health care will never cease to exist. With the health care facility problems will never cease to exist. I trust the administrator and medical personnel on how they handle the complex situations.

Jerry Basconcillo, member: Asked if Dr. Feldman finished his report regarding this issue?

George Sinopoli, chairman: No

Larry Lattman, member: Could we put this issue to rest.

George Sinopoli, member: Announced Debra Kania on HIPAA. Draft will be ready for your review.

George Sinopoli, chairman: OK

Judy Gaze, member: Announced if there were any family members for Walter Unruh's Appeal. No family members. Report to George Sinopoli to defer appeal until Dr. Feldman can apply his medical expertise and will get to us.

Robert Burrows, appellant: Informal second hearing request Farm and Home. Judy announced to give Mr. Burrow's time as he requested to say a statement. Robert Burrows handed out a written statement and read the statement.

Judy Gaze, member: Recommended to the Board to uphold the decision of the Department.

Motion passed to uphold decision of denial to repayment of 14 years worth of payments. Motion Passed

Richard Calton, appellant: Mr. Calton was denied because he is building a home on a remote part of San Diego County and on this acreage there are no utilities. The regulation with its bases in law is written there is a requirement of full electrical service. We have no choice but to turn down this appeal.

Motion passed to turn down Mr. Calton's appeal of a Cal Vet loan. Passed

Policy change on Non-Vet Spouse: It involves seniority in the Veterans Home in Yountville between the lady Veterans and the spouses of veterans living in the home. There are 200 ladies living in Yountville, 125 ladies are veterans, 75 are spouses of veterans. The policy of CDVA was in order to get combat veterans into the home they would allow there spouses to come in with them. At the time of entry everyone becomes a member and that is how the California Veterans Code reads. The seniority starts at the time of entry in the veterans' home of Yountville. We have had a hand few of ladies who have a legitimate grips but they fill they should be put at the top of the list for single room assignments, because they are lady veterans and go ahead of the spouses. That is the matter of interpretation. They knew what the regulation was when they entered the home and they want to change that policy. It has been looked at my Marcella and everyone agreed to leave the policy alone. Secretary Johannessen wrote a letter stating the policy will reflect what the law states. There have been numerous researches etc in the recent past. Don't understand how after two weeks Mr. Tuttle changed the policy, but I believe he was blind sighted the Secretary. This has been the most emotionally charged issue we ever had to deal with. I ask the board and Mr. Secretary to look into this situation and consult with your legal department who had done an excellent job in the research of this. Asking to resend the temporary policy done by Mr. Tuttle.

REPORT FROM BOARD MEMBERS ON ACTIVITIES FOR MARCH:

Jerry Basconcillo, member: Requested if there is going to be a change in policy to get it all in writing and we can make the decision.

Larry Lattman, member: To change the policy is against the law. We have legal opinion and what Mr. Tuttle has done was against the law.

Jerry Basconcillo, member: We still need something to look at to determine this policy.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: I would like to review with legal department before I take any action.

Judy Gaze, member: I attended the meeting in Yountville and I have been doing a lot of dialog with Debra Lehr who is the chief of Farm and Home.

Jerry Basconcillo, member: Attended board meeting in Yountville, also a couple veteran organizations, it was volunteer. I get involved in my county to help veterans.

Leo Burke, vice chair: On December 13th I attended the American Legion Amador Post Function hosting the National Commander, I was asked by my department commander to attend and also discuss issues that were important to this board. I attended a meeting in Brawly that was important. I attended the board meeting at Yountville.

Larry Lattman, member: Attended meeting in Yountville. Had a meeting with General Westly Clark. The home has been very busy. I am no longer chairman of the Allied Council for four years.

George Sinopoli, chairman: I was in Hawaii and I stayed very busy. Teleconference with Tuttle.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: In regards to Barstow. When I interviewed with the Governor he was concerned about Barstow. He wanted me to check into Private Enterprise. There has been a roadblock in doing that. It is a difficulty. The Governor really wants me to look into this. The Veteran expects this place to be a place to care of our Veterans. I am rethinking these ideas. I am looking into to reopen the SNF at Barstow. I am commented to make it happen and the challenges are great. That will continue to be top priority. I have visited all three homes and we have great staff at all the homes.

Deborah Kania, Deputy Secretary: Happy to report that the USDVA survey is complete. There were no negative safety issues. Minimum deficiencies. Louis Koff the fill in administrator in Barstow. We are actively recruiting a full time medical officer. We are close to that fulfillment. We are currently looking for a full time administrator. Looking into certifying and open the SNF. Reported on attendance and current progress at all three homes.

Louis Koff, interim administrator: Welcomed the Cal Vet Board to the Barstow Home.

Secretary Thomas Johnson: Shared a brochure that a home member came designed. There was a structural problem but Hugo a staff member took on the job and they are almost completed. Excellent staff who needs our support.

Larry Lattman, member: Greeted the allied council of Barstow. Need generators in case a black out in the middle of summer. Asked if the generators got on board three years ago when we discussed this? The answer was yes. At Yountville, the allied council got involved in making sure the PX will stay open.

Judy Gaze, member: Reported on Farm and Home. Discussed the importance of the number one priority is getting HR 1742 passed. I would to make a motion to endorse the proposal on the renewal of insurance information given to Judy Gaze by Farm and Home a renewal with a few minor changes.

Motion to endorse the proposal of renewal of insurance coverage. Motion passed.

Judy Gaze, member: Reported on current loan activity with Cal Vet Board.

Jerry Basconcillo, member: Report on Veteran Services, no report.

Leo Burke, member: Legislation, no report.

Jerry Basconcillo, Contracts: Motion to approve Extend Janitorial Services for Chula Vista,

Motion to approve extend Janitorial services for Chula Vista. Motion Passed.

Motion to adopt and recommend brokerage of insurance contract for Farm and Home. Motion Passed.

Leo Burke, vice chairman: Commended the Secretary in working with the veteran organizations.

Joe Maguire, chief council: Gave legal report.

Comments from Audience

Howell Jackson, select committee member: Greeted everyone and invited the board to his town in Georgetown for a board meeting.

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS:

All meetings take place on Friday unless notified.

Next board meeting in Clovis, May 14, 2004.

Yearly schedule is posted on web site: www.cdva.ca.gov/board

CLOSED SESSION (if necessary or required)

The general reason or reasons for a closed session, and the specific statutory authority therefore, are (1) to consider the appointment or employment of a public employee under the authority of Section 11126(a) of the Government Code; and (2) to confer with or receive advice from the Board's legal counsel regarding pending litigation under the authority of Section 11126(E)(2)(A), (2)(B), and (3) of the Government Code.

- There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.
- These minutes are only a summary of the proceeding portions are reported here verbatim.
- These minutes are posted to the California Department of Veterans Affairs on-line website at www.cdva.ca.gov/board

ADJOURNED at 12:00 noon.